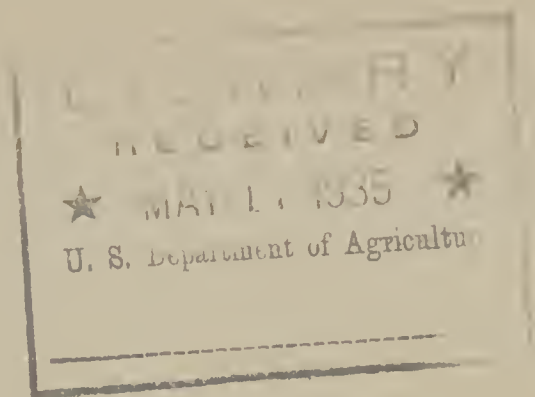


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations Monday, April 29, 1935.

--ooOoo--

Hello Farm and Home Hour Folks. Two weeks ago today I talked to you about flowers and having plenty of flowers around your homes to cheer you on your way, well, the whole country around Washington is in bloom today with the apples in full bloom, the cherries a mass of white, the dogwoods in full array and the narcissus and tulips at their height. For the past ten days the Japanese cherry blossoms have been the chief attraction but near my house there is an old apple orchard with an old colonial house in the background that defies description except to say that the whole scene is gorgeous.

This week the apple growers and the business interests of the Shenadoah Valley will celebrate their annual apple blossom festival at Winchester, Virginia, amidst a wonderful setting of thousands of acres of apple trees in full bloom. Everywhere in the region around Washington we have a wonderful prospect for plenty of fruit, but the kind and quality of the fruit we get will depend very largely upon its being properly sprayed and cared for.

Last week I did not have a single radio broadcast and I spent most of my time out in the open supervising the planting of several hundred welfare gardens. I have a garden club of about eighty boys who are between the ages of ten and eighteen years and last week there being no school in Washington we called it garden week and the boys did the major part of the planting in their small gardens. Every Saturday morning from now on and frequently evenings after school those boys will be out there in their gardens with hoe and rake cultivating and weeding. This club is sponsored by the Civitan Club of Washington, builders of good citizenship, and they are surely doing a good job making good citizens of those boys. Some day I'll tell you more about it, but, today I want to have a word or two with you about your own gardens and incidentally I'd like to leave the thought with you that there is a relation, and a very definite relation, between a good garden and good citizenship. I'll admit that it does not promote real neighborly spirit or good citizenship when you get up some morning and find a flock of your neighbors pigeons pulling up your peas that are just coming through the ground, or an old white leghorn from your neighbors henyard scratching up the hills of sorouting golden cross bantam corn that you so carefully planted. But it's all in the lifetime of the gardener I suppose. It pays to have a good fence around your garden because a good fence will keep out chickens and dogs but not the pigeons.

(over)

For the folks who have an income and can afford to buy their supply of vegetables there are plenty of market gardeners and truck farmers ready to supply you, but for you folks who live on farms and those whose income is limited there is just one proper course to follow and that is to have a good garden and produce the vegetables for home use. That is just following the law of self preservation. One of the real problems for a lot of folks this year is to buy their garden seeds and plants and under these conditions it is important to make the seeds go just as far as possible. Ordinarily we plant about five times as much seed as are required and then have to thin out a great many plants. While we want to be sure of getting a stand of plants it is a waste of both seeds and time required for thinning where we plant so heavily.

No sooner do we get our gardens planted and the plants begin to appear than the bugs begin to work upon them and this calls for our being ready with at least a small supply of poisons and repellents. We have a bulletin on the diseases and insects of garden vegetables. It is Farmers' Bulletin 1371 and it gives a lot of rather simple and inexpensive ways of controlling the diseases and insects that attack our garden crops. You can get a copy free as long as our supply lasts.

One of the real problems that many of us run into in our gardens is to keep our crops growing during dry periods. The past few days have been dry and windy here around Washington and while there seems to be plenty of moisture in the subsoil the surface is rapidly drying out. Watering can and should be resorted to wherever a supply of water is available and can be applied at reasonable cost but where we have no water supply that is suitable for watering our gardens the next best procedure is to apply a mulch of straw or fine manure to the surface to hold the moisture. I find that a combination of watering and a light mulch give excellent results. I've often wondered how some folks could grow such good gardens on land that is literally covered with stones but even the stones serve as a mulch to prevent the escape of moisture. It takes work to produce a good home garden but it is labor well spent if we get results.

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